

As Minnesota continues to clear the path for a new bridge, I know this body, as they promised that evening, stands ready to ensure that the appropriate funding is made available to rebuild it. It is one of the most heavily traveled bridges in the State and vital to our economy. If anyone would imagine the most major bridge in their metropolitan area, the most major highway overpass, suddenly falling into a river, you would understand. It is a bridge that takes people downtown, that brings students to one of the biggest universities in this country, and it brings hard-working Minnesotans to their jobs every day. But most important, it is the bridge that connects countless people with their families and friends.

On August 3, this Congress made a promise to the people of Minnesota that we would help rebuild the bridge. Today I come to the floor to ensure that we make good on that promise.

I am very happy with and I supported this effort to look at repairs across the country. That is what we just voted on today, and it passed. But I think we should make clear that appropriation did not include the money that Congress promised for the Minnesota bridge. It was used as the key example of why we needed to make repairs across the country, but it did not include the money to repair our bridge.

The last time I addressed this body, the day after the bridge collapsed, I said the rebuilding effort is going to be a long process. It is not just going to end tonight. Today I am here to take the next step in that rebuilding process. Our goal is to get this bridge rebuilt and to get our metropolitan area moving again.

The Minnesota Department of Transportation concluded that the loss of this critical bridge costs our economy \$400,000 per day. This is primarily due to lost travel time for commuters, for commercial truckers, for businesses closed down. This means our economy has already lost well over \$8 million since the bridge collapsed.

As this fiscal year comes to a close, I am dedicated to getting the funding for our State and the entire Midwest. We need to rebuild this bridge. We would like to rebuild this bridge as soon as possible, as I know this country wants to do and this body pledged to do. That is why we will work on this bill and whatever other bills we need to work on to get this funding for this bridge.

I applaud the efforts of my colleagues to get bridge repair for every State across the country, but we are devoted to ensuring that Congress make good on its promise and rebuild this bridge that is the symbol for why we need to make infrastructure repairs across this country.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, this morning, due to flight delays, I missed

the rollcall vote on the confirmation of William Lindsay Osteen, Jr., to be U.S. District Judge for the Middle District of North Carolina. Had I been present for this vote, I would have voted to confirm this nomination.

PRESERVING STRONG RELATIONS WITH OUR INTERNATIONAL NEIGHBORS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, among the important issues I wish to discuss this morning is an important issue, an international border issue with our friends and neighbors in Canada and Mexico, that could have severe implications for the social and economic ways of life for border communities in my own State of Vermont but all across the country.

In the wake of the September 11 terrorist attacks, a number of new border security measures have been put in place, all with the express goal of preventing another terrorist incident. I worked hard to provide balance and needed resources and to ensure that in the intervening years we did not focus solely on our southern border. I also have tried to convey to the administration and to this body something of the special relationship we have with our northern neighbor, Canada.

It is convenient to forget that most of the 9/11 hijackers entered the United States with legal visas. They would not have been stopped at any border. Some were on secret watch lists by this Government, but they were not being watched. And even later on, the Bush administration sent them official letters after they had killed themselves and thousands of innocent people in their attacks. The Bush administration had them on a watch list but did not watch them. In reaction, after these mistakes, the administration has demanded billions of dollars for constructing border fences, seeking to develop and to deploy surveillance technologies, and adding troops along our borders. Now in doing this, we have snared some illicit drug shipments, we have snared a few criminals. We have not picked up many terrorists.

Nobody questions that any country has a right to protect its borders, as we do to protect ours, but we should do it sensibly and intelligently. Instead, the administration's policy threatens to fray the social fabric of countless communities that straddle the border. They have needlessly offended our neighbors, they have sacrificed much of the traditional good will we have enjoyed, and they have undermined our own economy in border States. Local chambers of commerce along the border estimate that the costs of the administration's plans will amount to hundreds of billions of dollars and, I might say, the loss of thousands upon thousands of American jobs.

I have heard from many Vermonters about problems they have encountered at U.S. border crossings, from long traffic backups to invasive searches

and questions, to inadequate communications from Federal authorities about new facilities and procedures. Such a top-down approach does not work well in interwoven communities along the border where people cross daily from one side to the other for jobs, shopping, and cultural events.

I live an hour's drive from the Canadian border. Traditionally in my State, as in most border States, people go back and forth all the time. Many of us have family members in Canada. We have enjoyed an over 5,000-mile-long unguarded frontier. Canada has been an important trading partner. It has been a friendly neighbor not only to Vermont but to the rest of the United States for more than 200 years. It is in the best interest of both of our countries to keep those relationships as positive and productive as possible. Post 9/11, everyone on both sides of the border recognized the potential threat and security needs. We have hardened security around the U.S. Capitol, hardened it around the White House, and built fences near San Diego. But those procedures do not work on Canusa Avenue in Beebe Plain, a two-lane road where one side of the road is Vermont and the other side is Quebec. That is actually true. This is a street, an avenue. On one side, you are in Vermont; on the other side, you are in Quebec. What are we going to do, put an enormous barrier down the middle of the street? People are used to going back and forth to their neighbors to borrow a cup of flour or something such as that. Are they going to take two hours to go through some kind of an unnecessary, baseless search?

And we have the Haskell Free Library and Opera House in Derby Line, VT, and Stanstead, Quebec. The library and opera house is half in Derby Line, VT, half in Stanstead, Quebec. It straddles the international border. Mr. President, I invite you to come see that some time. It is a beautiful piece of architecture.

That is why I am so troubled by the so-called Western Hemisphere Travel Initiatives, which would require individuals from the United States, Canada, Mexico, and the Caribbean to present passports or other documents proving citizenship before entering the United States. This is a dramatic change in the way border crossings have been processed in the western hemisphere since the Treaty of Paris set up the international boundary to Canada in 1783. That is already costing us greatly.

The Departments of State and Homeland Security have been charged with implementing this law. They should be coordinating their efforts with our neighbors in Canada, Mexico, and the Caribbean to ensure a smooth transition at our borders. Unfortunately, as I detailed to Secretary Rice and Secretary Chertoff on several occasions, there are serious problems in the ways in which their agencies have pushed forward with implementation of the